# IDAHO
# DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME

Jerry M. Conley, Director

ASHTON FISH HATCHERY

Annual Report

1 October 1981 - 30 September 1982

By

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ABSTRACT

Our main purpose for this project at the State Fish Hatchery, Ashton, Idaho, is to support the fisheries management program of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game by culturing catchable and fingerling-size fish and stocking the lakes, reservoirs, and streams of the five (5) eastern Idaho counties that lie in Region 6.

Author:

Hark L. Misseldine
Fish Hatchery Superintendent II

## EARLY HISTORY

The State Fish Hatchery at Ashton is one of the oldest fish hatcheries: in the state. Some fish hatcheries in Fremont County were producing fish in the late 1890's.

The fish hatchery at Ashton was started by the J. F. Honess Ranch and Trout Company. They started fish culture work in 1909, but some sale of fish was done prior to that time. This private fish culture venture continued until 1919, when the State of Idaho purchased the property. There were 15.6 acres of land purchased which bordered Black Springs Creek on both sides down to the county road and enclosed the water source known as "Black Springs."

Mr. J. F. Honess continued to run the fish hatchery for the State of Idaho for a while after its sale. Some of Mr. Honess' hatchery helpers were Gene Clark, Earl Tobler, David Larsen, and George Isaacs.

George Isaacs, first superintendent, took over the hatchery from Mr. Honess. George was probably the first State of Idaho employee at the hatchery. He was appointed as fish commissioner **in** this area.

Past Fish Hatchery Superintendents:

John Franklin Honess - Owner, 1919 (wife Jessie)

George Isaacs - 1920-1927 (approximately)
Became first Fish Commissioner

R. Grant Costley - 1927-1930
First Fish Hatchery Superintendent

J. E. (Gene) Clark - 1930-1932

B. D. Ainsworth - 1932-1947

Harvey Albrethsen - 1947-1977

Hark Misseldine - 1977 - present

## INTRODUCTION

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game has maintained this fish culture station since its purchase for the rearing of trout for stocking in the six (6) eastern Idaho counties. These counties encompass the Upper Snake River watershed, including Camas Creek, Beaver Creek, Mud Lake, and Medicine Lodge Creek area.

The State Fish Hatchery at Ashton is located in 'northern Fremont County at an elevation of 5,275 feet above sea level on Black Springs, with a spring water flow of 6 cfs and 51 F temperature.

## PERSONNEL AND LABOR

The station operated as a fish culture project (03-18-307), with two (2) permanent personnel and one temporary fish culture aide (laborer) working in a rotation schedule on a forty (40) hour week basis. Four-thousand one hundred-sixty hours of labor from the two permanent hatchery personnel, plus 1,300 hours from the one temporary laborer and 400 hours of overtime were used at the hatchery for maintenance and production. This labor totalled 5,860 man-hours.

With the termination of the CETA and YACC programs and the cancelling of Government Aide programs through the State Employment Department, this station needs at least 1,500 hours of temporary help (labor) for the forthcoming production year of 1983.

A recommendation to make this station into a "three-man station" is highly desirable. With three permanent personnel, no overtime would be needed and more help could be given to the regions who call for help and be able to still have one man available at the station at all times.

## FISH FEED USED

There was 50,850 pounds of fish feed fed out during the year, 32,600 pounds less than the previous year. This year's fish feed cost was $10,520.90, compared to $16,330.57. This was our dry diet-type feed. Also fed out was 300 pounds of Oregon Moist type diet at a cost of $114.00. This feed was all received under state contract.

## FISH PRODUCTION

During the 1982 production season, we produced 137,604 catchable-sized rainbow with a total weight of 32,600 pounds; 103,160 sub-catchable rainbow were cultured, With a weight of 5,750 pounds. Our fingerling rainbow production totalled 455,675 fish, with a weight of 2,444 pounds.

There were 497,250 cutthroat trout with a total weight of 2,210 pounds. Our brown trout weighed 1,806 pounds, totalling 518,881 fingerling up to three-inches long.

We cultured 95,000 grayling sack fry with a weight of five pounds. These eggs came in from Daniel, Wyoming, Fish Hatchery and were shipped to Hagerman and McCall hatcheries for planting. Plastic bags with oxygen were used for these shipments.

Eighteen thousand four hundred forty-four brook trout were received from the Mackay Hatchery and held at Ashton for two months. These were planted out at 250 pounds into Henrys Lake.

Production for the year was 1,826,014 fish weighing 42,255 pounds.

### FISH EGGS RECEIVED

| | Rainbow | Cutthroat | Brown trout | Grayling |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| West Virginia White Sulfur Springs | 245,686 | | | |
| Hayspur | 420,540 | | | |
| Plymouth Rock Trout | | | 590,786 | |
| Henrys Lake | | 723,988 | | |
| Wyoming State Daniel Hatchery | | | | 124,000 |
| Total eggs received: | 2,105,000 | | | |

## FISH DISEASE

The hatchery water supply is probably our major factor in breeding our most troublesome disease, "Bacterial Gill Disease. This gill problem occurs in our young fry and fingerling fish when they start feeding and overcrowding the 6 cfs water supply. If larger fish are overcrowded, then this gill problem will occur.

We use copper sulfate, Purina 4X, and curtrine as chemical agents to control this disease.

Chemicals are only a control vehicle, not a complete cure. A major change in our spring water supply system is needed to correct this problem. Proper fish. density per cubic foot of water and water flow are also needed to keep this disease from reoccurring. Reccommendations have been made to our Bureau of Fisheries and Bureau of Engineering.

Hexamita, Strawberry skin disease, and external bacteria can be controlled at this station with the use of epsom salts and formalin.

## STATION IMPROVEMENTS

We have built a new water-pumping station. This system is used to load fish trucks, yard irrigation, and fire control. The water for this system is pumped with a five-horse electric pump and a four-inch plastic pipeline connected to an "East Spring" water supply. During the year, we also built a utility shed addition on the south side of residence #2. All improvements were done with hatchery crew labor.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS WORK

We worked with and attended meetings of the local sportsman organizations and the Forest Service and completed our obligation to the Taylor Lawrence and Truce ranches.

We had both money and physical assistance from Trouts Unlimited, a sportsman organization of Idaho, Falls, Idaho, in helping with our brown trout program. With these people's assistance, our brown trout were planted into Henrys Fork of the Snake, Warm River, and Robinson Creek.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Priorities for future construction and improvements at the Ashton Fish Hatchery are chronologically' listed below:

1. Hatchery water supply reservoir dikes resurfaced with gravel and reservoir divided with gravel dike. Present dikes are eroding with wind action and rodent burrows. Reservoir needs dividing to eliminate ground surface pollutant from entering reservoir, and eventually total reservoir enclosure by means of buried filteration system of springs.

2. Hatchery water supply overflow and east spring water supply being combined to supply water for two (2) new cement fingerling raceways located in old broodstock pond #2.

3. New well house built over present domestic cullinary water supply well site. This would separate water supply in case of fire and increase water pressure to the system with less maintenance and better control of system.

4. Utility shed constructed onto present three car garage building and garage built onto residence #2.

NOTE: Plans and drawing for hatchery water supply reservoir refurbishing has been furnished to the Boise Office prior to this report.